

NEWS RELEASE

Alabama Department of Public Safety

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TROOPERS PLAN TO INCREASE ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY *Urge Motorists to Drive with Caution during Thanksgiving Holiday*

MONTGOMERY – All available state troopers will be on duty during the Thanksgiving travel period to help ensure the safety of holiday motorists, according to Col. W.M. Coppage, Department of Public Safety director. Troopers anticipate heavy traffic, and they urge motorists to drive with extreme caution throughout the period.

Coppage said the increased patrol effort will work to reduce the incidence of drunken driving, speeding and other serious traffic violations during the holiday travel period. He said enforcement activity will include driver license checkpoints, line patrols and saturation patrols in selected areas. Troopers will utilize LIDAR – portable laser speed detection devices – as part of their speed limit enforcement efforts. LIDAR units are often used from a stationary location like a bridge or overpass, and they have proven extremely effective at detecting speed limit violators.

Coppage called on motorists to join in the traffic safety effort by closely observing all traffic laws, and practicing courtesy and patience in the heavy holiday traffic. “Alabama’s state troopers urge motorists to drive with care and caution, watching out for other drivers and buckling up on every trip.” Coppage said troopers will emphasize enforcement of safety belt and child restraint laws during traffic stops and at checkpoints.

Alabama troopers, along with state police agencies nationwide, are stepping up their enforcement and safety education efforts as part of Operation CARE, Combined Accident Reduction Effort. This combined effort by state police throughout the nation is designed to increase traffic safety awareness and promote safe travel during holiday periods.

The Alabama Department of Public Safety estimates that 18 people may be killed in traffic crashes in Alabama this year during the 102-hour holiday travel period that begins at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 23, and ends at midnight Sunday, Nov. 27. Last year 11 people died as a result of traffic crashes during the Thanksgiving period, six in rural areas and five in urban locales. At least four of the deaths were alcohol related, and seven of the fatal crash victims were not using safety belts.

11-18-05

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